

A Favourable Life

by

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Published by

J.C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS

Burton Drive

Winona, Mississippi 38967.

U.S.A.

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First Printing, 1980

Art Work, India

Typesetting, Sam Boyd Enterprise, Singapore

Proof Reading, Gordon Hogan

Offset Printing, U.S.A.

A Statement From The Publisher

One of the great forces in the church today that has been tragically overlooked, and is still unharnessed, is that of the women and their role and work for the Lord. Have you ever noticed at most lectureships, workshops, or any kind of meeting, the women are almost completely ignored? If any time is given to them it is on the basis that some woman or two are invited to come to have two or three sessions squeezed in between all of the other activities going on. This is such a shame and it would be my prayer that we will grow up to recognize Christian women for what they are worth.

Women as a whole are going through a very difficult period. They are faced with a minority militant group who are trying to legislate and change woman's role. Because so many of the ladies, and men as well, are prone to stay in the background, and to remain quiet, this could very well make it possible for the radical ones to go on to victory. But this must not happen. It is up to our ladies in particular to stand up and be heard on these issues. We men need to support them or else one of these days not only will our wives and daughters have to suffer the consequences, but we will likewise have to suffer along with them.

Sis. Joyce Dunavan raises this question, and many other vital points, in this book. Such materials need to be studied by Christian women across our land. To be knowledgeable of their position, duties, and responsibilities, will make it possible for them to come forward and to be active in filling their rightful place in life. With proper knowledge they will become better citizens, wives, and mothers because they will be the Christians the Lord would have them to be.

I am more than pleased to be able to present Sis. Dunavan's

book to you. Sis. Dunavan herself, along with her husband, Gary, attended White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies in West Monroe, Louisiana and has written on the basis of being a woman, a Christian woman, the wife of a gospel preacher, and a mother. She is therefore qualified, and she has the desire to communicate to ladies everywhere some things that will make it possible for women to find favor with God and man.

The Dunavans make their home at 826 Virginia St., Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina 27870 where they serve the Lord. If you like her book I am sure that she would be pleased to hear from you.

J. C. Choate
Church of Christ
131 Moulmein Road
Singapore 1130
January 29, 1980

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my husband Gary, and daughter Kimberly. Through their patience and understanding this book is made possible. And to my mother who I'll always love and look forward to the day I will be reunited with her as my sister in Christ.

A NOTE TO THE TEACHER

This book has been divided into thirteen parts. There are six chapters divided into eleven sections. There are two special sections. One is a group discussion and one is a review test. This enables you to teach this book in thirteen weeks.

Introduction

“ . . . Thou hast found favor with God,” Luke 1:30. What a beautiful thought. We all desire this, to be found favorable in His sight. In this particular context the angel had told Mary that she had been found favorable in God’s sight and that she would bear God’s Son.

This book is written for me and for you. It is written for anyone who seeks to improve herself. Many women have written books. I have been helped in many areas by these ladies. I in no way claim to have the answers to all of your problems. However, in the next few pages I have tried to exhort, encourage, and teach some Bible truths for us today.

The entire goal of this book is that it would help us all to be found favorable in the sight of God. Whether you are a working girl, a mother, grandmother, or widow, this book is written for you.

IN HIS SIGHT

*What can I do or say,
To be acceptable in His sight?
Only the things he asks me to,
The things I know are right.
Bless me Lord, I pray, to live a Godly life day by day.
Nothing I can do or say of my own will,
Will ever be enough, “Lord I need Thee still.”*

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Chapter One
(Part One)

**“Finding Favor With God As
A Woman”**

The story was once told of a successful businessman. He was asked, “What is the reason for your success? How did you get to where you are today?” He quickly responded that it was by the help of two women. “One was my mother, who instilled certain goals and responsibilities into my life,” he said, “and the other was my wife, who had the confidence in me that I could meet those responsibilities and achieve those goals.”

This man placed a high value on womanhood. His wife and mother must have been elated over his attitude. Some men do not have this attitude about the women in their lives. That could be because women today, or at least some, are not finding the joy in being a woman that God has intended.

There is a true joy in being a woman. I am proud to be a woman. I hope that you share in this joy. Being a woman is certainly nothing to be ashamed of—she is no less a person than a man. She is simply a person, fulfilling her God given role.

In Proverbs 31:10, the writer placed a high value on woman. We know that the Holy Spirit guided Him to write this. He said that a woman’s price was far above rubies. In God’s eyes, man’s eyes, and our own eyes we should know we have a very special role.

We are equal to man, yet in subjection to him. In Galatians 3:28, Paul says that “We are all one in Christ”. Men and women can both be heirs of salvation—on an equal basis. We don’t have to enter salvation three steps behind man.

In I Corinthians 11:3, Paul explains a little better as to what it means to be in subjection yet being equal. In this passage Paul says that the head of woman is man, the head of man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. This passage shows that we all have our God given realms. Christ is in subjection to the Father. Look at their relationship. He was equal to the Father in Deity, yet He was in subjection to Him.

In the Garden where Jesus prayed, he asked that the cup pass from Him. He then said, "not my will, but thine be done." This is a beautiful example of the way God intended for man and woman's relationship to be. Not my will, but thine.

Woman and man both are in subjection to Christ. In Ephesians 5:22, we see woman is to be in subjection to her husband as she is to Christ.

We might use the example of a factory in explaining our roles. The workers have a leader, who is responsible for his work, and also for the production of his workers. His is a dual responsibility. It is the same with man; he simply has the responsibility in matters. When the Bible tells us, as women, not to take authority over a man, it simply means don't try and take over his responsibility. You have your own realm that God intended for you. Don't try and take his role as a man, but take on your role as a woman.

God gave elders the responsibility to lead the flock. We need to realize that we are not the only ones in submission. Order cannot prevail without God's system of authority. We should feel thankful and not resentful. Everyone having his way would be mob rule. Thus no one would benefit!

Things just seem to work a lot better if we will do them as God intended. Many women are leaving their children, their husbands, and their homes to take on the role of a man. Then they wonder why they aren't happy! They take on the role of

a man, leaving God's scheme of things and thus become unhappy in either realm.

Several of these ladies have banded together and demand to be men! They are even trying to pass a law now saying women and men should be considered the same.

Working girls are due the pay they work for. You should get the pay you rightfully earned. But don't be fooled by the amendment that is before the voters now. When we are classed as men it takes away rights that we already have. We have God given rights as women, and I want to keep mine.

Do you want communal restrooms? I don't want my children to have to grow up with this as a common practice. If you are doing work, and a man is doing the same work but being paid more, I don't blame you for wanting equal pay. Investigate our amendment we now have. I think you would be stunned at the effects this would have. Do you want your little girl or grand daughter to have to serve in the Armed Forces? Being a mother of small children would make no difference as far as eligibility. This is what happens when we try to step out of our realms and take on those meant for someone else.

A person's race, sex, or origin should make no difference as far as equal job or educational opportunities. Work on our laws and amendments, but please let's not degrade ourselves and the lives of our children.

Men and women are both human beings, one complementing or completing the other. A man is logical and business minded, while a woman goes by her feelings and emotions. In religion a woman is usually more worshipful. She may excel in certain areas greatly over man and in other areas she may be far below him. (Such as in areas of strength.) God intended for woman and man to complete and not compete against each other. Woman's role is important and she should serve God to the

best of her ability in it. A man has a lot of worries and stress. Frankly, I wouldn't want to be put in charge of everything.

God did create us with differences, physically, emotionally and in the chemistry of our bodies. This helps each to excel in their realms. No other creature can fill woman's role. She will be happier when filling her role than in anything else. She equally does her part in making the home. Her husband is the bread-winner and she is busy making a home for her family. She shares equally in the training of the children.

Homemakers, did you know that everytime you wash a dish, change a diaper or cook a meal for a sick neighbor, visiting the shut-ins, all of this is important to the welfare of the home and to God.

Making a home and keeping a home, that is what it is all about. The women in the homes are the central figures. You can be the highlight of it, or it's downfall.

We won't function well in another's realm. We give God the glory even when we do the little things around the house. When we learn these two principles then we can learn to appreciate more the joy in being a woman.

Chapter One
(Part Two)

An Open Home — An Open Heart

Try opening up your home to others. The blessings are astounding. Open up your home to someone who needs you. You can't solve their every problem but you can lend a listening ear. Most of the time that is all they wanted anyway. They just needed someone to take the time out of a busy schedule to listen to them. Most of the time they will end up working out the problem themselves. They just needed a friend, someone they could talk to without having to fear it being spread all over town before morning. Just a friendly smile and a listening ear will do wonders for a troubled person.

Be like a sponge, soak in all the love and companionship you can. Then on those lonely days when you really need a friend you will be blessed with many.

*Reach out to those who need you,
They need you just to be there.
This is all you have to do,
Perhaps you can't tend to their every need or care,
One day later on you will see
What a great-blessing this will be.*

*One day you will need someone,
Just to be there with you.
So, don't think of all the deeds you have done,
But think, "What can I do?"
I want to be the kind of blessing you see,
That I want others to be to me.*

People need other people's love,

*Everyone needs another sometime,
That is something we can't live above.
We all have the time – If we'd take the time.
My life with others I want to share,
You see, my sister needs me – Just to be there.*

*I can help her if I'll try,
I do more today than before,
I'll need her by and by.
Of love and life this is the core:
To everyone I meet be kind,
To put others first in mind, and just be there.*

Have you ever been with someone who just brightened your whole day? Have you ever been so bubbling over for the Lord that just being with you for a few minutes brightened another's day? I think we miss the whole point in Christianity by not taking an active part in the everyday lives of others.

Sometimes we don't give ourselves enough credit. We have the right motives but not the confidence to follow through with them. We get it into our heads that we are the least of all people as far as our abilities are concerned. In fact we are afraid to do anything new or stand against the crowd. We are just not confident in our own worth.

If I feel that I am somebody and that I am important, not because of self but because of Jesus, then I will be ready to grow in love and kindness toward others. Just a good feeling about yourself can work wonders in your life, whether you are a parent, a wife, or a single lady. Build-up your self image. (I am not talking about vanity or being puffed up). I am speaking to all the ladies who feel they are worthless to anyone.

Christ died for me and He died for you; He died for all

mankind. More important, however, he was raised for us. If Christ cared enough to die for us, then think what we are worth as individuals. He loves you and He loves me!

Sometimes we forget our importance to our friends, families, and our children. One of the main reasons for our lack of self-confidence is that we don't set goals. If we do set goals they are unattainable and therefore frustrate us even more. Then comes the "I knew I couldn't do it" attitude and we give up completely. We need to set goals we know we can reach and then after we reach them set higher goals, and keep going.

Get to know yourself. Think on the good points, and develop them. If our talent is painting a portrait, mopping a floor, or just being a good listener, whatever it may be, learn what it is and then develop it. Try always to improve it and accept the things about self that we cannot improve. For instance, you can't change the fact you have big ears, but remember, you have pretty little feet. (Or whatever you have going for you.)

The most important rule in building up your self-image is don't dwell on past mistakes. Forgive yourself, then forget it and go on.

Commit yourself to Christ and He will be of strength to you. Always knowing He is on your side will give you new inner courage. Remember — You are somebody. You are somebody to God or He wouldn't have given His Son for you. You are somebody to Jesus or He wouldn't have given His blood for you. You are somebody to your children or they would not give their love to you. You are someone to God or He wouldn't have given you life.

When our confidence improves our whole way of life and personality will improve. Appearance and grooming habits

will improve as well. You will be more concerned about the appearance of your home and the cleanliness of it. All of this improves because of the realization that I AM SOMEBODY. Not because of any greatness on my part, but because of Jesus.

As our confidence grows, we tend to be more hospitable. One of the qualifications of an elder is to be hospitable to others. If his wife is not hospitable and not willing to open her home or herself to others, she can prevent him from qualifying as an elder. He cannot be hospitable in the home if she will not let him. If you think a woman's role is not important to God, then you have missed the whole point of womanhood!

It was brought to my attention the other day that it is a lot easier to be hospitable than it used to be. Long ago in Abraham's time they had to go and kill the meat they ate. Then the ladies would have to dress it and then cook it. Imagine all the preparation that went into just one meal! Today if we have unexpected company we just run to the grocery store and get an instant dinner or to a fast food restaurant and buy chicken. We would "die" if our husbands came in and told us to set the table for three more as Abraham did Sarah. Remember, they had entertained angels! (And us with all our conveniences!).

Travelers should share our homes instead of a motel room. Just think of the blessings we would receive. We would make new friends, that might be friends for a life time. Just because we were hospitable. The Bible is full of examples of hospitality.

**Chapter One
(Part Three)**

The Influence Of Womanhood

A woman can be just as important and be single. Paul says in II Corinthians 7, that the virgin cares for the things of the Lord and the married cares for the things of her husband. The virgin is more concerned with God, keeping her body pure. Paul is not saying it is wrong to marry. In verse two, he says for every man to have a wife to avoid fornication. Verse nine says that it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

Marrying just because "it's the in thing" or because everyone else is doing it would be wrong. An unhappy marriage is much worse than to not marry at all. Marriage does not assure happiness. Think of all the lives that would be affected in an unhappy marriage. Your life and your husband's would be affected, but also children, your parents and his, friends, etc. So be sure!

Of all the divorces, the overwhelming majority is said to be in the teen years. Wait until you are sure. I Corinthians 13 says that love is patient. So don't jump into it without thought.

Sometimes we confuse passion with love. Many young people in their teens have felt they loved each other, only to find out it was merely the discovery that there is a difference between male and female. Don't confuse this with love.

There is no disgrace to marry or not to marry. Just be sure before a life-time commitment is made.

If you believe that a woman is as important as we have discussed you will certainly see that her actions, words, and appearance are of great importance.

James tells us in James 3:2, that if we can control our tongues we can control our whole body. This shows the importance of the proper use of our tongues. The tongue can tear a home apart or it can hold it together. It can win souls for Christ or it can discredit the church and the gospel. When we open our mouths and speak, everyone immediately knows what kind of person we are.

A Christian's tongue should be honest. People should know us. If we say yes, we mean yes. If we say no, we don't mean yes. In Acts 5, we see the story of Ananias and Sapphira his wife. They lied to the apostles about the price of some land they sold. It was not wrong for them to keep the money. They didn't have to sell it. It was wrong for them to lie about it! Peter said in lying to him they had actually lied to God. You see, God knows our hearts. Ananias had told a half-truth. He had sold the land but not for the price he said. In lying he was struck dead. His wife also lied and God struck her dead as well. They were both taken and buried without a funeral or anything. God must have been trying to tell us something!

We see from this example that God looks upon half-truths as whole lies! A lie is a lie whether it is a "little white" one or a "big black" one. Do you really think that God looks on a lie as a little one?

In Proverbs 31:11, we see the portrait of the worthy woman. Verse 11 says the heart of her husband trusts in her. Do you think a husband would trust a wife who told "little white" lies on occasion. Think about it! Would you trust someone you knew to lie? How would you know when they were being truthful and when they were lying? I wonder how many homes have been broken because of "half-truths"?

A Christian's tongue must be truthful. I have seen parents send their children to the phone and have them say, "Daddy's not home." When in reality daddy was stretched out on the

couch and didn't want to get "hooked" into helping someone. When we do this we are teaching our children to lie. This is simply what we are doing. There is no way around it. Instead of helping them and teaching them right from wrong. Instead of instilling Bible truths into their little minds, we are teaching them to grow up to be liars. Ephesians 4:25, says to put away **all** falsehood.

One of the most prevalent problems for the Christian woman is that of gossip. This is probably the most harmful use of our tongues. James says in James 3:8 that the tongue is a "restless evil full of deadly poison". I used to know a person who said, "Don't say anything you wouldn't want hung out in the foyer on the bulletin board." We should never say anything harmful about another person. We can gossip and be telling the truth.

On occasion things are said never intending for them to get back to that person. We sometimes backbite and criticise and then when they come around we are all sugar and honey. Did you know that a gossip's closest friends do not even trust her. They know she talks about others and wonder if she'd do the same to them if given half a chance. A good rule would be, never say anything about someone else if you can't think of something good to say. Everyone has some good point. Maybe they're good mothers. Always think and say good things and you might even end up liking them.

Perhaps we gossip because we are idle. In I Timothy 5:13, we read of widows who were busybodies. They went from house to house saying things they shouldn't. They were idle and in this idleness they harmed the church and the gospel. There is so much to do in the work of the Lord. We could spend our idle time in study, or in helping the needy, or maybe making someone feel better.

Profanity used to be a problem among the men. Today

the ladies seem to be worse. As Christians we need to stand up and let them know how we feel about such language. If we sit silently by they think that we approve of it.

A Christian woman would try to avoid words of anger. This simply shows a lack of self-control. How small a member to rule a whole body! James says a tongue can be like a fire out of control, destroying everything in its' path.

A Christian woman's tongue should be beautiful and appreciative. The tongue should be used to glorify God and to speak to others about Jesus. How that he came to earth, died and rose again on the third day. The grave could not contain Him. He died for our sins and ascended back to the Father. He will return again one day for us. This is the gospel. We can show by our tongues how great it is to be a Christian.

You might ask, "How can I get my friends to stop gossiping?" By our example. If we start to be more appreciative and try to build up rather than tear down, the rest of our friends will be influenced by it.

Not only do our words influence others, but our appearance as well. Modesty is an important tool for a Christian woman. We can win souls with our modest behavior, I Peter 3:2. Let the inward woman outshine the outward woman. In verse 3, Peter talks of the outward adorning. He isn't saying it is wrong to fix our hair or to wear jewelry. He was talking of wearing those merely for the purpose of getting attention. In I Timothy we read that women are to adorn themselves in modest apparel. Fashions don't change modesty. There is nothing wrong with keeping with the fashions. You can dress fashionable as long as it doesn't cause a man to lust. If our clothing causes him to lust we have sinned and caused him to sin. If you have a doubt as to whether a certain dress is modest, chances are it is not. In Matthew 5:28, Jesus said that if a man looks at a woman with lust he has committed

adultery in his heart. If he dwells on it, he will actually end up doing it.

In Proverbs, the worthy woman is said to be "clothed with dignity." Do short shorts or mini-skirts make one look dignified? Put on love, peace, joy, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. These are all fruits of the spirit. Be clothed with these inwardly. Be yourself, but be the best that you can be. A liberated woman — in Christ.

Our influence as women is staggering. We influence so many people it is hard to imagine the impact and force we have. The destiny of nations has been in the hands of a single lady. We can use our influence to the detriment or to the good of others. Let's look at a few Bible examples of influence and the effect it had on those around before we close this chapter.

Eve would be my first example. Eve the mother of all living. Her influence over Adam introduced sin into the world. She influenced her husband to partake of the forbidden fruit. Thus using her womanhood to the detriment of herself and Adam. Eventually they were removed from the garden and certain punishments were set down. Just because of one lady's influence a home was ruined.

We can and are capable of doing the same with our husbands. Just stop and think of the times we have used "our little ways" of getting our husbands to do something against their will. The influence we have over them is not wrong, it is the way we use it that is wrong.

Deborah would be an excellent example of using it in the right way. She influenced a nation. Simply teaching them God's will and relying on Him. She influenced Barak to go against an enemy nation. He would not go unless she went

along with him. She was not afraid and they prevailed against the enemy. She knew that God was with them. She judged in a quiet way as a woman. For forty years the Israelites were at rest. She used her influence wisely.

Priscilla is another good example. She influenced a preacher to change his message. She and her husband taught him more perfectly the way of the Lord. Apollos became a great servant of God. Thus she helped teach a man without usurping. In Romans 16:3, Paul commends her and her husband to the churches.

Two last examples we will look at are Eunice and Lois. The mother and grandmother of Timothy. He learned much about God while a youngster under these two ladies. He later traveled with the great apostle Paul. He is mentioned several times throughout the epistle's of Paul. Two of them are written to Timothy. We can see that the influence of these two ladies was far-reaching. They not only influenced Timothy but Paul as well. Many Christians of that day were influenced by the teachings they gave to him. Even today we are influenced by his examples.

We see from these five ladies that women are a mighty weapon for good and for evil. Eve brought sin into the world. Deborah judged a nation and brought them peace. Priscilla helped in the instruction of a mighty preacher. And Eunice and Lois, training a young man who is a good example to us all.

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER ONE

Part One:

1. What is God's pattern of authority?
2. What is the result of everyone having his own way?
3. Class discussion: God's plan vs. E.R.A.

Part Two:

1. How can an elder's wife affect his qualifications?
2. Define homemaker.
3. Class project: Write a paper on E.R.A. and its' effect on the housewife.

Part Three:

1. Is "subjection" an outdated term?
2. What can an unmarried lady do to show her subjection?
3. How can we influence nations as Deborah did? Can we do it through our children?
4. Discuss the Biblical examples of influence in this chapter. What effect will my influence have on those around me?
5. Name the most significant factor in finding favor with God as a woman.

Chapter Two (Part One)

“Finding Favor With God As A Wife”

The breakfast dishes are piled in the sink. Dirty clothes in every corner and the baby is crying. Junior wants his friends to come in and play and you are about ready to throw up your hands and scream. This is when your husband comes in and announces, “I forgot to tell you, I invited my boss and his wife over for coffee. As a matter of fact, I think I hear them pulling up right now! Let me go see.”

Don't give up — join the club. It has happened to us all at one time or another. The key is to remain calm. Grab the coffee cups. Meet them at the door with a smile and say, “It's such a lovely day, I thought we'd have coffee out here on the patio.” I am sure that we have all been in similar situations.

Perhaps it was not fair of the husband. He should give her due respect. He wouldn't have wanted something like this to happen to him. He wouldn't want you to bring guests to his office at his busiest time. Maybe it was unfair. But we do unfair things as well.

We promise to love, honor, and obey. As soon as we get home we are complete opposites. Marriage is a life-time commitment, cf Romans 7:23. When we look at marriage in this respect it is easier to cope with problems. No matter how mad or how furious — he is yours for life. You chose him. You picked him and he picked you. Does this sound gloomy? Well, it doesn't have to.

If you will work at your problems, you can turn each problem into a growing and maturing process. (Yes, we all

have problems). Use them to learn by and don't be stunted by them. As one lady so aptly puts it, "George built me a patio."

I have seen wives and husbands almost divorce over going on a trip or what color to paint the den. These whims should not prevent us from fulfilling our God given roles as wives. Make your life-time commitment a life-time joy and not a life-long drudgery for you both.

Commitment means a promise to do something. What did you promise to do? To love your husband! You cannot love him and not want the best for him. If he is a very unhappy man then you have not fulfilled your pledge. How do we know this? If we give our husbands due respect, honor, love, and tend to his needs, there is no way for that man to be unhappy!

As a friend and I walked through a local department store, we over-heard a conversation between two ex-class-mates. One of the ladies was actually startled to find out the other one was still on her first marriage. She said that nearly everyone in their class was divorced and remarried. I later commented to my friend that we used to be startled by the fact our friends were getting divorces and now we are startled because they are not! This type of attitude may be prevalent in our society today, but it is in defiance of the word of God. In His book He said one woman for one man for one life.

To make a committed life work we must first be committed to God. After we have done this it is hard not to want to become committed to our husbands.

Most women expect to change their husband after they marry him. Then they have to live with that mistake for years. Marry him the way he is. Don't expect to change him after marriage just because you are his wife. If he won't

change while you are dating him, chances are he surely won't change after you marry him. Men resent someone trying constantly to re-work them. Just as we would resent the same treatment.

Women do have a great influence over their husbands, however. Sometimes we just don't realise how much! We mentioned in the first chapter about Eve, and her influence over Adam. She used it wrongly and we also mentioned others who used right uses as well. (It would be good to stop and go back to this section and read it again.)

Let's look at the worthy woman in Proverbs 31. Verse 28, says that her husband and children rise up and call her blessed. Maybe we have been called a lot of things but blessed wasn't one of them! This is a beautiful example of a woman who has found favor not only with God but with her husband and children as well.

A proper concern for God and His regulations about marriage makes it easier to get along with each other. We seem to have a greater desire to get things right. When God told woman to be in subjection to her husband, he meant that as well as he meant "Do not commit adultery." If not – why not? Some women do not agree. Would God tell us to do something he did not mean? Would he tell us to do something we could not do? Certainly not!

God wants us to obey His commands. All of them, to the best of our ability. Not just because he wants us to keep laws but because we will benefit from it. In other words we will be better off. He knows that a woman cannot be happy taking on the role of man and vice versa.

Chapter Two (Part Two)

Problems And Marriage

It is easy to be in subjection when all is going great. Our husband being on his best behavior. A non-Christian could do that. There is no effort in doing that. The hard part is when he could care less if we get along or not. When everything in the house seems to be going wrong — that's when it is a challenge. However, that is what it means to be in subjection.

Once we had company for a week. Our water seemed to be off more than it was on. We had just moved in and were trying to help our very good friends find a house as well. We had classes to teach and children to bathe. It seemed as if my husband was trying to test my patience with every move. (Actually it was more my fault than his). This is when I decided to try and write this book for myself and for others who might need help in this area. I discovered that I didn't really know what subjection was or even what it meant. If I could be submissive when all was rosy and well, why not on the difficult times too? There is no clause in Ephesians 5, such as wives be in subjection to your husbands (as long as it doesn't put you out or as long as it is easy for you or as long as he is minding you). No — it simply says for wives to be in subjection to their husbands in everything. Good days, bad days, any day. (This does not mean to be a door mat. It does not mean that you cannot have a mind of your own.)

Sometimes problems arise that we cannot handle alone. Especially is this true for a wife whose husband is not a Christian. If you do encounter problems you can't handle, go to someone who can help you.

Perhaps your husband is an alcoholic. Many women each

day are faced with this startling reality. If you are in this situation, get help! Do it for him and for you. (And your children) So many wives are ashamed and try to hide it or keep it a secret. This is wrong and harmful to all involved.

What causes alcoholism? It is probably from not caring for the body, not keeping the health in check. Possibly feeling insecure about life would lead to it. The most important is a lack of spirituality.

Alcohol is dangerous to the body. It affects every vital organ in the body. With all of that going against it, what keeps an alcoholic alive? Well, eventually it will kill him if he keeps it up in all probability.

If he won't get help — you must. Get someone to help you — learn how to help him. Remember that an alcoholic's emotions won't be on a normal level. His thoughts may be distorted and he may be depressed. Be good to him. Tell him about God and encourage him. Leaning on God will help him to overcome. He will never do it alone.

By all means don't give up on him if he does quit for a while and then all of a sudden loses control again. Give him time. After all, he has been accustomed to this for several years, so don't try to change him over night.

Help him to get involved in the work of the church. This will keep him busy and his mind functioning. He can lick it with God on his side and a loving wife behind him.

When he does try to change — what about his friends? All of his friends are probably his drinking buddies. Some believe they must be around alcohol to resist it. The pressure would probably be too strong. (Philippians 4:13; I Peter 5:7). Make sure that he has ample opportunity to make new friends and stay away from the alcohol.

Last of all he has to decide for himself to stop drinking. You cannot do it for him. Even though you would like to. You can encourage him and set good examples for him. Go to your preacher and he can refer you to someone who can help you. There are clubs and organizations established just for this type of situation. Don't let his depression depress you to the point of self pity. Pray about it often. Pray for the wisdom to help him.

There are many problems that can beset our marriage. One of these is a lack of communication. The wife will say that her husband doesn't talk to her. On the other hand, the husband will say she doesn't care for sex. Each are legitimate claims. Both stemming from a lack of communication. We must talk our problems out to ever get rid of them. A little communication will do wonders for a marriage. How long has it been since you sat down and talked to your husband? If he is there now put this book down and go talk to him. You can finish this chapter later. If you are in a class, talk to him when you get home.

Love can change people. You can't nag him into changing but love can change him. If he has a habit that he needs to be rid of remember he'll never do it by your nagging. Try a little love instead of complaints.

Money can be a problem too. Either too much or too little of it. It can hurt your marriage. Remember that the Bible is the best guide book for marriage. Use it and study it. See what God planned for marriage. He didn't plan for the wife to make all the decisions or plan the budget (alone without her husband's consent). I am not saying a wife cannot plan the budget. She can as long as it is alright with her husband. Some women are just more business minded and can budget it out better. I have known wives who take the paycheck and spend it. Not caring what her husband's

thoughts are. He should have the final say so.

Spiritual conflicts is another problem in marriage. If your husband is of a denominational group and has different beliefs than you, you can run into serious problems. The way to overcome this is for you both to keep an open mind. Get your Bible because it is our guide in life and marriage. If done in love and with an open mind, you both can become members of the same church you read of in the Bible. Remember to keep an open mind. That is the key.

Immaturity is probably the main problem in marriage today. Most of the other problems stem from this one. A failure to put away childish attitudes and act as adults. This is extremely prevalent among newly weds. They have just left one environment for another. If they have not been prepared and trained properly, then there can be serious problems.

It is essential for parents to instruct and nourish their child to prepare for the future. If your spouse is the one acting immaturely then your example of love and maturity can influence him to grow-up and be the man he needs to be. Remember – love changes people. Criticising and condemning him will only make it worse.

In I Corinthians 13, we read of the true meaning of love. I will try – to apply this love to the love we have for our husbands. We can speak to our husbands, and not do it with love, and we are just making a lot of noise. We can know certain things about our husbands and not understand them. We have accomplished nothing. We cannot love them if we don't have faith in them.

We can be generous and not do it in love. If we give just to get something then our giving is vain. This can apply to our sexual lives also. If we give our bodies just to get a new dress or a trip to mother's we're wrong. We should give out of

love, true love.

Love doesn't keep a record of wrong doings. Love is polite and not rude. Sometimes we say we are just being frank and in reality we are just being rude. Love looks for the best in others. Try to pick out the good things in his life and not dwell continuously on the bad ones. It is good to want to improve ourselves but not to the point of griping and picking at every little thing.

If we have true love we'll shoulder our share of the burdens. We won't try to cop out when the going gets tough. Love is a permanent thing. There will be bad times but there will be the good times too.

We should never be childish. A child is supposed to act like a child but an adult should act mature as an adult.

We should have faith and hope in our husbands' abilities. But we should mainly have love toward him. This is the greatest of the three. Without love our faith and hope would be vain.

We should have the true and pure love that Paul talks of in I Corinthians 13. Titus 2:4 states that the older women should teach the younger ones to love their husbands. Because of the fact that God told the older women to teach the younger women to love their husbands, He must have known that women would not always love their husbands the way they should. God knows that it takes a great deal of patience and love to keep marriage a holy state. We see in I Corinthians 13, that without love nothing counts. When we are lacking in love, nothing else can be completely right. Ephesians 5:25 says for the husbands to love their wives. If he does not love you, whose fault is it? Is it because you are not living up to your duties as a wife? In all phases of life whether it be in the home, on the job, or wherever — let's make love our aim!

Let's look at some background to I Corinthians to better understand some of Paul's writings to them.

The Corinthians were not very strong as of Paul's writing to them. There were many customs of that area that were contrary to God's law. It was also a trade route and known for its' evil ways.

To some, a part of their religion was acts of prostitution.

Some of the Christians had not grown to the point of rejecting all of the customs of that day. To have been raised to look on these sins as religious acts, then become a Christian and see they're actually sin. This would be very hard. That is why Paul says in I Corinthians 7, to avoid fornications, let every man have a wife. So we can conclude that a wife who witholds her body from her husband and causes him to commit adultery is guilty of sin. He is guilty, but she is guilty for causing it!

There are times you must separate yourselves for prayer but we must have each others consent. We are each to give of our bodies freely. The husband hasn't power over his body and the wife hasn't power over her body. The husband should never hold back from his wife, neither should the wife withhold her body from him.

Our first responsibility is to God and then to our husbands. God ordained it this way.

In I Peter 3:1-6, Peter speaks of being a "daughter of Sarah". In Verse 5, the women who trusted in God are said to have been in subjection to their husbands. How about that? Being in subjection to your husband helps to show your trust in God. Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him lord. This just means she gave Abraham due respect. The last part of verse 6 says we are her daughters if we do well. So when we

are in subjection to our husbands we are found favorable to God. Sarah made mistakes. She was not perfect. But she strove to please God and Abraham. As long as we as Christians are striving to please God we will be found favorable in His sight!

Husbands are commanded to love their wives. Wives are commanded to be in subjection to their husbands. Husbands are commanded to provide for their wives and wives are commanded to love their husbands. Each has special roles so they can fulfill each others needs.

Our first priority other than God is to our husbands. We should strive to help make a home for him. Far too many wives aim is to build a beautiful home and work to make the payments, thus telling everyone she *has* to work. (I am not saying she cannot work). Materialism is a very grave problem in today's world. We are all subject to it. Having things is not wrong. Just don't let those possessions possess you. This was the problem of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19. He had not sinned in owning them, but in building a life around them to the point he wouldn't give them up for anything.

In Titus we are told to be keepers at home. We should strive to keep our homes the happiest and most pleasant place our husbands can find. If we'll do this they won't have to leave home and seek it elsewhere.

Don't go so far as to just be concerned about keeping a house. Many women's aim in life is simply a spotless house. Put it in the proper perspective. We read of Mary and Martha in Luke 10. Mary sat at Jesus' feet and listened to Him while Martha was busy serving. She went to Jesus and we see His reply to her in Luke 10:41-42, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things : but one thing is

needful and Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken away from her." Temporary things will be gone but our spiritual things will live on. Mary was seeking Jesus' word. It will be here when our generation passes. Mary had indeed chosen the better part.

Martha was not wrong in being hospitable, she just put her emphasis in the wrong place. Let's be like Mary and seek the better part. Don't neglect your families needs, but more than that, don't neglect their spiritual needs.

I talked to a lady once who told me she did not love her husband. What was so terrible was that she didn't care. Many ladies may think they're not in love anymore as the physical attraction wears off over the years. Love is something you have to work at day-by-day. You don't fall into it as some think, and then fall out of it. But rather it is a growing and maturing process. Two people becoming one and sharing each others lives. The good times, the bad times, the joys and the sorrows. If you feel that you don't love your husband anymore, perhaps the flame has died and you have suddenly realized that he is merely a human being full of mistakes. It doesn't have to be this way and it won't be if you will work at keeping your marriage alive. A homemaker, as we saw earlier, not only makes a home but keeps a home. The same is true in marriage. You can keep that flame going if you try and really have the desire to. Marriage is a life time.

In Genesis 2, God says that a man shall leave his father and mother and the two (he and his wife) shall become one flesh. So many marriages have been ruined by interfering in-laws or else a failure of the marriage partner to cut the "apron strings". If a child is old enough to be married he is also old enough to make his own decisions. This must be realized by both parents and child.

If a problem arises and you seek your parents advice, that's fine. Or maybe the parent has a suggestion for you. But for the in-law to flagrantly interfere, or the child to run to mother with everything, is wrong.

Honor your parents. But never put them in front of your spouse. If problems arise with your in-laws, always let the relation go to them and talk to them. A mother will love her son afterward, but she won't appreciate as much the wife. Use tact and love when these type of situations arise. Handling problems like these when they arise prevent barriers. After a barrier has been built, everything will rub the wrong way. No matter how small they seem.

Barriers are easier built than torn down. Sometimes we build them before giving another a chance. We just expect people to fall into certain categories. We immediately classify them, hang a tag on them and either reject or accept them without a second thought. I have met people whom I thought at first were genuine and later found out different. I have also rejected people at first and later found them to be great friends. This is the exception lots of times rather than the rule. But this does happen and because it does we need to be careful of pre-judgement.

Would you want to be judged in this manner? As a Christian we must not fall prey to this sort of game. When I think of barriers, a castle with a mote comes to mind. We sit in our "castles" keeping out anyone who doesn't "look" like they meet our standards. If we see some fine-looking person on the other side, we immediately let down the draw-bridge and let them in. Without a doubt as soon as the stranger is in we raise it up and lock it!

Let's try to have an open heart and try to get along with our in-laws. After all, they produced that man we love.

In conclusion, let's look back and review our lives in relation to Biblical examples and commands. When we have the union that God commands we will complete one another. We'll satisfy each other's needs and desires. We have to be committed, it must be worked at. It doesn't come natural. For some women it is harder than for others. With God's help we can be found favorable. And after all, isn't that what it is all about!

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER TWO

Part One:

1. Why do so many marriages today fail?
2. What was God's plan for marriage from the beginning?
3. Does God want us to be a bunch of "law keepers"? If not, what does he desire?
4. What does a *life-time* commitment mean in marriage?

Part Two:

1. How can a Christian wife win her non-believing husband?
2. Discuss some problem areas in marriage and what can be done to overcome them.
3. Is love for your husband an automatic thing, or must it be worked on?
4. What were some of the Corinthian customs?
5. Discuss the meaning of "keepers at home".
6. Discuss the difference between completing and competing against one another.

Chapter Three
(Part One)

**“Finding Favor With God As
A Mother”**

As the nurse walks over to the window, the anxious father squeezes the hand rail. Pulling back the blanket, she unveils a beautiful black-haired girl. The father smiles and his heart feels full of love and devotion from that one little glimpse of his new born daughter. This is worth more to him at this moment than anything he possesses. This is a typical scene at a maternity ward today.

Why then do many parents each year abandon their children or abuse them to the point of death? This question is asked by many and not clearly understood. Perhaps the new wears off and they feel trapped into something that may have not been their choice. Most parents who abuse their children claim no real reasons. They will say that their child was a good child. Then why does this happen so often?

Why is child abuse so prevalent in today's society? Many children are killed each year. No matter how sickening this may seem, it is true. There are many instances of parents brutally beating their children, kicking them to death, keeping them locked in a room for years, and the list goes on. Some parents will say that their baby kept crying and would not stop so they beat it till it did stop. Some will say they beat the child and the more they beat the more they wanted to beat him. It gave them a feeling of fulfillment. Whatever the excuse, it is a very real problem.

You might be wondering what to do if you ever encounter a child being abused. Get help immediately. Be safe rather than sorry. His little life may be totally in your hands.

If you are married to a non-Christian it is possible he or someone you know might be an abuser. If you are married to one — get help! There are many good organizations set up for this. There are people who will come and talk with you in private. Even if you are afraid, he might be a potential abuser, talk to someone about it. Why make your child suffer needless pain? Not only will you save your child from pain, you might save his life and possibly yours as well.

There are other types of child abuse. There have been cases of children actually dying from lack of love. No one ever beat them. They were just pushed into a corner and shown no parental love whatsoever. We need to show our children openly that we love them. Parenthood is a grave responsibility. Many enter into it lightly, without a thought of the future. Just having a baby makes some feel they have accomplished something. After the baby arrives they don't know what to do with it. They just wanted the joy and experience of conceiving a baby without having any responsibility. Thus, using their child like a child would use a new toy. After the new wears off it is placed in the toy box and forgotten.

Motherhood is important. It is a serious matter and not a game. God places a high value on motherhood. God saw fit to give Jesus a mother. He had a mother to raise and care for him. And most of all, to love him. A baby cannot live without love. It cannot care for itself. That is what mothers are for. You will notice in the Scriptures that Jesus obeyed and stayed with His parents until He was an adult.

To have been chosen to bear God's Son must have been wonderful and awesome for Mary. She must have been a God-fearing woman. (However she was a woman and nothing more. He never intended for anyone to worship her, Luke 11:27-28). We can look at her and see a woman who was obedient and never complained at the shame that would be

brought upon her. Can you imagine how the towns people would talk! Mary and Joseph weren't married but she was found with child. But she willingly did this. She put herself through shame to bear God's Son. At the Cross she must have suffered greatly, seeing her Son on a tree of shame. (The Jews thought anyone who hung on a tree was God cursed); feeling her Son's shame and hurt as any mother would and shedding her tears for Him.

But she had a feeling of joy and happiness that no other woman will ever feel. Seeing the empty tomb and knowing that she had borne God's Son — her Saviour and ours.

In Acts 1, we see where she even became a follower of Jesus. We hear no more about her. This should show us that God wanted us to remember Jesus and not Mary. (Remembering Mary's example, but not place undue recognition on her as being anything other than a woman).

Another mother we need to look at is Jochebed, mother of Moses. Imagine her faith! Hebrews 11:23 says that she hid Moses three months by faith. God worked it out so Moses would not only be safe from those who sought to kill him, but kept him safe in the king's palace! The very one having all the Hebrew children slain. God didn't stop there. Moses' own mother was sent for to be his nurse. God kept him safe and kept his mother near to raise him. One day he would lead his people out of Egyptian bondage.

We have looked at Mary's self-sacrifice and Jochebed's faith. Now let's look at Hannah's prayers to God.

Hannah was barren. She could not conceive a child. She prayed to God and promised that if she could bare a son she would give him to God. She later had that son and named him Samuel. When the time came she did as she had promised. She took him to Eli the priest. She visited him once a

year. Each time she brought him a robe.

Can you imagine giving your son to God, literally, as she did? Some mothers try to discourage their sons from preaching and others simply refuse to hear of their sons becoming missionaries. How sad!

Look at these three women. Mary gave her Son to the world. The Lord and Saviour of us all. Jochebed gave Moses up for his safety. Hannah wanted a son so badly that she prayed to God and dedicated him to the Lord. All three loved their sons and kept their sons best interest at heart. They all thought of themselves last. All three put their faith and trust in God.

So we as mothers must also put our faith and trust in God. When our children get ready to go out on their own, we have got to let them go. We have done our part. They must then make their own decisions and achieve their own goals. If we have instilled the right attitudes in their lives we can be assured of their decisions.

Don't try to make happiness for your child when he is out on his own. Let him find his happiness as you did. And when he selects his companion, love her as you would your own daughter. I once heard a mother say that no matter what happened she would take her son's side whether he was right or wrong. How ridiculous! No matter if his wife was right she would take her son's side.

A good rule is to never take sides. Let this be known from the beginning. If sonny comes in and tells you something his wife said, tell him he is the man of his house (of course if he has a real problem, help him with advice if necessary) and that he will have to handle it. After all she was his choice.

Give advice only when asked and then measure what you say. If you have a good relationship with both of them from the start your advice will be appreciated and highly regarded by both.

Never show favoritism. If you love your child you will respect his mate.

Of course the classic example of a mother-in-law is Naomi. Ruth told her that she would go with her, "your people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God." This last line should be considered. You could very easily win your daughter-in-law to Christ by the attitudes she sees in you.

Naomi always kept Ruth's best interest in mind. Could you encourage your daughter-in-law to re-marry if death took your son? Naomi did — she always considered Ruth's welfare above her own. The next time you sigh, "Oh, if my daughter-in-law were just like Ruth!" Remember that you will have to be like Naomi!

There was a couple who were trying desperately to conceive a child. For medical reasons they were unable to do so. His mother would get them in front of other people and lecture them about not having children. She thought they didn't want any. The couple thought that was a private matter between the two of them and at the time a doctor was prescribing medication for the wife. This greatly embarrassed them to say the least. She had interfered in their private lives and in doing so built a wall around them.

Before we leave the subject of children I would like to study the subject of discipline. Discipline is not for punishment, it is for correction and instruction. We sometimes try to punish and forget about correction. Discipline is for their well-being. If discipline is withheld, and the child is spoiled, he will grow-up to be a spoiled adult. God ordained discipline.

Many times in Proverbs God speaks of disciplining your children.

All kinds of discipline can be used. The most frequently used is corporal punishment. To say that this only should be used is in error. It should be used regularly. Have you ever talked to your child and got him to do much more than he had been? Talking can be used as discipline. Don't forget that your child is a human being and capable of mistakes. Just as we are. Most of the time we go to the extremes. We either punish — punish — punish or let them go wild.

Chapter Three
(Part Two)

Make Love Your Aim!

Lack of discipline shows a lack of concern for your child's well-being.

Lack of discipline shows lack of love.

Lack of discipline shows lack of understanding.

Lack of discipline shows lack of care for your child's future.

Lack of discipline shows a lack of love for God and His word.

There was a teenage boy who was picked up by the police for running away from home. When asked if he had been beaten he said "no". He said, "I wasn't a battered child. In fact my parents never raised a hand against me in any way." When the officers asked him why he had left home, he said, "They didn't love me. They didn't care if I came or went. They gave me everything I could have asked for except the one thing I really wanted. Love."

Love makes all things go round. Love is discipline. Love is a child's face lit-up when her mother enters the room. Love is caring and being cared for. Love *is*!

Your child is a product of your love for your husband. So how could you not love him? Money is no substitution for love.

There were two sisters talking about their childhood. One of them made the statement that she could never remember her parents ever saying "I love you". They knew they were loved by their parents. But it was never expressed openly. Thus, making it hard for them to express their love to others.

It is important to express your love to your children openly. It is necessary to let them know they are loved. Don't just expect them to know it. If you find it hard telling them, the more you do it, the easier it will become. Before you know it you will be saying it without thinking. Don't say it unless you mean it.

At the teen years your child is trying to find out who he is and what he wants to be. This is a very important time in his life. Most of his basic attitudes have already been instilled. It would be foolish to wait until this time to try to put values into his mind. He is now maturing into an independant adult. When he reaches this stage, mother no longer has her great influence over him. However, she will always have a special place in his heart.

At this time in life he is not a child but he is not a mature adult either. He is a mixture of both. He is ready to launch out into the world and face it head on, but the child in him shirks the responsibility. Sometimes that goes along with maturing.

We hear lots of stories of mothers who push their children until they rebel. They leave home and rush their adulthood, taking on a responsibility some aren't ready to cope with.

Here is a simulated letter from a girl who has ran away from home and now is sorry for her haste.

Dear Mom,

I have changed a lot since you've seen me last. I have grown up a lot too. I still have a lot to do. I found out a lot of things you told me were true. A lot of your advice was good and I realize it now. It was tough being a teenager but it is even tougher to be a teenage adult. I have discovered one

thing, I can't do it alone. Mom, I became a Christian the other night. That has helped me more than anything. I have God to lean on and to depend on. You were right, mom, and I was wrong. I don't want all the hassle like before. I want to come home, mom. Let's both work together and overcome our problems. Forgive me for my stupidity. I hope I can be as good a mother to my kids as you've been to me. I love you!

Love,

Jane

See you Thursday.

Jane's mother's motives were right. Maybe she just went about it in the wrong way. Teenagers have enough pressures without us adding to them. Gently lead them down the right paths. Firmly, but gently. No matter how right something is, you will never get it across to them by pushing. It's like feeding a baby. You feed it one spoon at a time. If you tried to give them a whole jar at once they'd spit it out or choke to death. On the same hand you would not try to feed a baby a big hunk of meat. This is what Paul uses to illustrate how we should teach new Christians. By milk first and then meat a little later on. Same with teenagers. Gently spoon feed them. Don't try and cram all of life into them at once. It will either be ignored or they will rebel as Jane did. You might not ever get them back. I am not saying a teenager should not be disciplined. I am saying that teenagers are at a cross-roads in life. They have some childish attitudes but they also have adult thoughts.

TEENAGERS

*I wonder what it's like to be an adult;
I know what it is like to be a child.
That's a time of mild,
And mixed up tumult.*

*It is a time when mothers say "no"!
And fathers just shake their fingers,
And a moment never lingers,
Without one of them saying, "I love you so"!*

*But I wonder about an adult life,
Is it so happy and free?
Or will it be binding on me,
And full of pain and strife?*

*What is it like to be mature?
Will I still be me?
Or someone else to be.
I just can't be sure!*

*I don't think I'd want to be,
Anyone else you could find,
So if you don't mind,
I'll just be me!*

*I think I know what it's like my friend.
It must be all of the years all mixed-up,
That I spent while growing up.
But I guess I'll never know just how it is 'til then.*

You mothers who do have older children, don't forget the mothers with the small children. They need you — your advice. (If asked for). They also need your time and your patience. Can you remember when you needed someone to keep your kids? Oh, how we forget! After ours grow-up we seem to forget how it was. My child is four and I've forgotten what it's like to have a tiny baby around the house. Changing diapers, scrubbing bottles, staying up all night with the colic, and that four hour feeding schedule that usually was a two hour one. These young mothers need you. I needed advice at that time more than any other time in my life. I didn't want it from young mothers like me who had learned

from trial and error. I wanted that wisdom that comes from experience. If you think that because your child is grown and gone that you are not needed, you are wrong.

Before I exhaust this subject, might I add – don't give unwanted advice. If it is asked for – fine! If it is helpful – fine!

A word here to the younger mothers too. Listen to those ladies with experience. Your mother-in-law might be a good one to go to. She probably has some good ideas worth listening to. After all, she did a pretty good job on your husband, didn't she? She must have. Because out of all the guys in the world, you chose him. He must be pretty special!

MOM

*Mom all I have are good memories of you.
When I think of you I always smile.
You did all you could for us kids,
Trying to make a better life for us.
My world came tumbling down when you left us,
I know I'll see you again one day,
It's not so hard to accept knowing this.
I love you mom and always will.*

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER THREE

Part One:

1. Discuss your personal feelings as to what causes parents to abuse their children.
2. Name at least three Bible mothers who were good examples of motherhood.
3. Is corporal punishment necessary in discipline?
4. Discuss the meaning of discipline.

Part Two:

1. What causes a child like Jane to rebel?
2. What is the "rod of correction"?
3. Should we exalt Mary today? Why?
4. Who is Mary's mediator?
5. What happens to a child that is never shown any love?
6. Discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of rearing children. Do the advantages out-weigh the bad in your opinion?

SPECIAL REVIEW SECTION OVER CHAPTERS 1-3

Divide the class into groups with four per group. Appoint a leader for each group. The group will discuss the four questions listed below one at a time (among themselves). The group leader will put down several points that her group arrives at. (This enables us to get several ideas and approaches to the same thought. At the end of each discussion the group leaders will then share their points with the whole class. About five min. per question).

1. Which of the ladies we have studied thus far has more qualities that you feel are necessary in being a favorable woman?
2. Describe your personal feelings toward one improving their relationship with their husband.
3. What are some "basics" in bridling the tongue?
4. Do you know anyone who is favorable in your eyes? Without naming names list her qualities.

Chapter Four
(Part One)

**“Finding Favor With God As A
Friend And Neighbor”**

It was once said that a friend is someone who knows all of your bad points and loves you anyway. In Proverbs 17:17, we see that a “friend loveth at all times”.

We all need friends. No one wants to be all alone but to have friends we must give of ourselves. We must be friends to expect this kind of true friendship.

We need to be interested in what they are. Taking an active part in their lives and in their concerns will help us to give of ourselves more freely. Now that is not to say that they should be placed above our families. But on the other hand, don't let your family shut out your friends.

We must show our friendship openly. Ruth is a good example of true friendship. In Ruth 1:16–17, she was not ashamed to show her friendship openly. We must be sincere and not hypocritical. When we have the love of Christ in us it is not hard to give of ourselves and our time.

In I and II Samuel we read of David and his friendship toward Jonathan. It was a mutual friendship. In I Samuel 20:17, we read that Jonathan loved David as he loved his very own soul.

This is the way Jesus loves us. He loved us enough that He was willing to lay down His life for us. “Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for a friend.”

We have all had very close friends, I am sure. I know I have made mistakes and fallen down a few times. My friends were there to help pick me up and help me stay on my feet. But we can't be a true friend if we are the ones always falling. We have got to be the crutch sometimes. It is selfish to take and never give!

We need to learn to listen. We let opportunities pass by simply because we didn't listen. Don't be too busy not to give an ear to your friend. Perhaps she has a problem and you are the only one she can trust enough to talk to.

I think a lot of times we blurt out things and say things to our friends without really thinking. Watch your words. Don't take advantage of your friends. She might be your friend but she is still a person with feelings. You might end up losing her. A good friend is hard to come by.

Let's not let our love and good works stop here. We need to help everyone in need. It's easy to help someone we love. It is no big sacrifice to help a friend, but Jesus said to love your enemies. To bless those who curse you and use you. Loving an enemy really puts us to the test. Not loving their deeds, but their souls. It's hard to return evil with good. If someone hurts our family we want to retaliate.

Some of you may be thinking, "Yes, I have opened my life to others, and I got burned." That happens! I have personally tried to do for others and then be taken advantage of and used. You may get hurt, but you might also make a lasting friendship. You might save a marriage. You might lead someone to Jesus.

Jesus did not say, "love those who are worthy". I have heard people say, "I don't mind helping anyone — as long as he is worthy." Maybe this statement is more familiar to you,

“Let them prove themselves before I will have anything to do with them.”

No one is *worthy* of Jesus' love! None of us are worthy! He gave Himself *freely*. We trod under foot the Son of God when we neglect taking the gospel to the world. Do you think you are worthy of the love of Jesus? A man who was perfect in His service — sinless. This is why having His blood to cleanse us is of such great importance. We are not perfect and no matter how hard we try we come up short. (CF Romans 6, a very good example of how we have access to His blood) .

The next time you wonder if someone is “worthy” of your love, just remember Jesus and His love toward you!

We need to be a loving people. After all, I John 4:16 says that “God is love”! We love our families, our friends, and our enemies. That last one is a little harder to do, isn't it?

If we love our friends we will be sincere and fair toward them. Don't abuse them. If they give up their valuable time for you, can't you give up a little time for them? If they kept your children while you went somewhere or while you just rested, don't refuse them when they need you. Be fair. Don't be *too* busy.

Keep those friends that you have made, they are a valuable asset and very hard to come by.

Chapter Four (Part Two)

“Love Thy Neighbor”

I have had some pretty good neighbors in my time. Once when we moved to a new state we were busy packing and unpacking and arranging the house. My neighbor came over with food prepared for us. She did this whenever a new family moved into the neighborhood. She was constantly doing good deeds to anyone who needed her. The sad part of this is that she was not a Christian.

We once lived by an elderly couple who we seldom saw. One day she told me her husband was very sick and that she could not find anyone to mow her yard. So, the next time my husband cut our grass he cut theirs as well. This was his way of helping them out. She felt so appreciative that she baked us a peach cobbler. This was her way of saying “thank you”, “we appreciate you”.

We can give of our time or of ourselves. This won't cost a cent and we will reap much reward from it.

I am so sad when I see neighbors who fight and bicker. I have known people who have lived next door to another and not even know their names! Years will pass and they will never know them. What has happened to the American people?

We hear a lot about “southern hospitality”. Let's keep that phrase intact. That goes for the north, east, and west as well!

We get to feeling so self-conscious when we think about meeting new people and this tends to make us withdraw into

our shells and not be the friendly people we want and desire to be. I have a lot of faults and sometimes I don't feel like I am worth a plugged-nickel.

This reminds me of the story in Matthew 19, when Jesus said "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to heaven." In the context, the rich man is one who lets his possessions possess him. Instead of possessing them, they possess him. He later states that with man it is impossible but with God all things are possible. So with God on my side I'm somebody; with God all things are possible. If only we will believe and place our trust in Him. We can, with God's help, make it through any trial and temptation that falls in our way. Get self out of the way and put God first.

Knowing that God is with us will help us to be the kind of neighbors we would want ourselves to be. The lady who just knew she didn't have a friend and that no one liked her, was not trying to be a friend or good neighbor. If she had put forth an effort it would have been different. You can't sit in your house all day and expect to have friends and neighbors running all around. We have to give of self.

We need to be enthusiastic about the gospel so that this enthusiasm will rub off on everyone we come in contact with. The people we are around all the time are the ones we can share Jesus with. We can have our own mission field right around our home. When our neighbors see us living for Jesus and obeying the civil laws they will not only respect us but Jesus as well. You can't teach someone by your examples if you don't obey the civil laws. They will think you are a hypocrite.

A stop sign doesn't mean yeild and a fifty-five miles per hour sign does not mean that you can drive sixty or sixty-five! This is a part of being a Christian woman and obeying God. If

we want to live a favorable life we must obey the civil laws.

We are blessed with freedom in this country. But sometimes people will misuse their freedom. When we misuse a freedom, we will the majority of the time infringe on someone else's freedom. When liberty is taken to that extent you no longer have a right to that freedom.

I once heard the story of a man who drank quite excessively. When approached about it he said it was his business whether he drank or not and no one had the right to tell him otherwise. One night he was drinking and behind the wheel of a car. As he crossed the intersection he didn't pay any attention to the red light or to the car on the other side. As the lights flashed and the horn blew, all that could be heard was the grinding of metal and the screams of a heartbroken mother. As the little boy was dragged from the twisted mass, his mother was hysterical. All the man could do was hang his head. He didn't feel much like talking of rights or his freedoms, all he could think about was the life he had taken.

When we exercise our freedoms to the extent of infringement on others we can no longer consider them liberties.

Was this a sad story to you? I am sure it was. It is a heart-breaking reality to some. Drunken drivers kill many people yearly. You might say, "Well, that is kind of extreme, isn't it? I don't drink so I don't have to worry about it." That may be true. But everytime we take the wheel of a car and disobey a law we might be taking someone else's life into our hands. When we, as Christian women, set a bad example and cause someone to lose their soul we have committed the worst kind of infringement. When we really realize our influence and the power we have as women we will stop and think before we exercise any rights we may think we have!

In conclusion, let's not take advantage of any of our rights. We may harm the person we love the most in this world by doing so. Remember the story we just read the next time you hear someone talking about their rights!

Jesus came and died on the Cross that I might have life. If He did that for *me* I can at least share it with others.

My friends on this earth might forsake me, my neighbors might persecute me, but Jesus will always be there. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow — forever and ever. He is the greatest friend I have ever had!

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER FOUR

Part One:

1. What is a friend?
2. Give the Bible definition of friend.
3. Name two men who are good examples of friends in the Old Testament.
4. Who is our best friend?

Part Two:

1. What makes us not want to meet new people?
2. We can have our own mission field at
3. Do I always have the freedom to exercise my freedom? Why?
4.is the same yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever.

Chapter Five

“Finding Favor With God As A Teacher”

In our home we teach our children and friends what Christ means to us even though at times we don't realise it. The home is the best classroom for teaching there is.

We can teach in many ways. We can teach our husbands by our chaste behaviour as it says in I Peter 3. We teach by our actions, attitude, and examples. We are not limited in our teaching except in one way. We are told in Timothy not to teach or to usurp a man. This means that we cannot take over or teach him in a usurping manner. We can not get up in worship and teach as we see in I Tim. 2:12. The key is our attitude and how we go about it.

As a general rule the average Sunday School teacher in the children's classes is a woman. This is her way of doing her part in teaching God's word. A woman can do so much more than she does. We can help the sick and needy, comfort the bereaved and help the erring and weak members. She can show her hospitality and help teach the lost. She can teach the younger women how great it is to be a part of God's plan. She can be a Christian wife and mother and help her husband in his service to God.

I am sure that you can think of many other ways. Let's keep our minds focused on the positive and put these principles into action.

The teacher must set a good example in front of her pupils. If she is slack in her attendance, how can she teach her students that attendance is important?

Have you ever kept children for someone who had a Bible study? If you did you took an active part in teaching the lost.

The other day I kept a child while her parents went on a Bible study. They baptized the woman. Did you know I had an active part in this conversion? If your talent is keeping the kids, showing a filmstrip, or standing in front of a ladies class, do it. Maybe it is just sweeping the floor. Whatever role you play it is just as important as anothers. In the Lord's work we don't have more important jobs. They are all important. If I had refused to keep their child that study might have been cancelled.

If you can't go, send someone who wants to go! Do your part!

Jesus is our supreme example of a teacher. His teaching was done in public and in private to His apostles. In Luke 2:43-50, we see him at the age of 12 teaching in the temple. In verse 52, we see where Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor toward God and man. He not only was found in favor with God but man as well.

Here is an article from the *Christian Woman Magazine*, July 1977, Vol. 45, No. 7.

TEACHING PRE-SCHOOLERS

Being a teacher is a very rewarding and gratifying experience if approached in the correct manner.

The teacher must set a good example before her pupils. She (or he) cannot teach them that attending church services is important if she herself is slack in attendance. Neither can she expect her pupils to grow spiritually if she herself is not growing. This is very important to effective teaching.

She must be prepared when she enters the classroom. Start on Monday in preparing for the next Sunday. She should never enter without studying her lesson first. A teacher is a guide and this could not be done if her lesson is not studied thoroughly. How could she expect her pupils to learn anything if she herself doesn't know what the lesson is about!

She should have a definite plan in mind and a definite aim. This will prevent running down every "cow trail" in the lesson. If she has a definite plan and aim in mind then the entire teaching will go smoothly. If everything is all planned out at the beginning this will prevent a helter skelter during the middle of class in trying to decide where to go next.

The teacher should always have in mind that her pupils will only retain ten per-cent of what they hear, but will retain ninety per-cent of what they do. With this in mind she should allow active times as well as quiet times.

Most of all, I think the teacher must try to understand her pupils and what their individual needs are and their characteristics.

Understanding their individual needs and problems, she could more easily handle the classroom situations, thus creating an appropriate atmosphere for learning.

Teaching is a grave responsibility. (James 3:1). We must put our all into it. These little children are in reality little souls who will one day need a saviour. They will have a decision to make a little later down the road. It is our aim and goal, or should be, as teachers to help them make the right decisions and guide them down the right paths. This decision will last an eternity. We seem to

realize they have physical needs, clothes, shoes, food, etc.; we should never take lightly that we have a responsibility even greater than these. It is to feed their souls and help them be ready when they will reach that point in life that they will need Jesus for a Saviour!

by Joyce Dunavan

This shows us the example and responsibility of the teacher. Some of these points are intended just for classroom situations, but I think we can see that the teacher has a grave responsibility in all areas of teaching.

Let's keep Jesus foremost in our lives so that we can be the teachers we need to be. God has given us all a role to play. As we mentioned earlier, even when you babysit for someone else to go teach the gospel you have taken a very active role in teaching the lost.

Always keep in mind that Jesus is our supreme example. He came to this earth to save men from sin. Let's not count His death as nothing. Let's get out and show others by our teaching that Jesus still lives and that He is coming again one day, for us!

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER FIVE

1. Who is our supreme example of a teacher?
2. Name some positive things a woman can do in her service to God.
3. What is the most important "job" in the church?
4. Can a woman teach a man? In what way?
5. What is to be foremost in our minds to be a good teacher?
6. Name some ways that we teach other than a classroom situation.

7. Is a pupil's characteristics important in teaching him effectively?
8. Discuss I Corinthians 14:34.
9. Name three things important in our lives to effective teaching.
10. Do I personally qualify as a good teacher?

Chapter Six

“Finding Favor With God As A Christian”

God had a plan from the beginning to save mankind. (Ephesians 1:3–7). Man sinned in the garden thus needing redemption. Man was separated from God. (Isa. 59:1–2). Sin had separated God and man. All through the pages of the Old Testament we see the seedline of Christ unfolding. Sometimes it seemed as though it were halted but God always prevailed. Through Leah’s son, Judah, the Messiah was born. Judah was the tribe through which He descended, on down through David and finally to Christ Jesus.

How did Christ redeem us? Through His blood. (Col. 1:20) He redeemed us into one body. (Eph. 5:23). So, the question is this, “How do I get into the body so I can have access to His blood?

The reconciled body of Christ is the church. (Eph. 2:16; 1:22–23). Acts 2:38–47 says that those believers who were baptized were added to the church. So, we see the access to the blood is through baptism. If we are Christians we have been redeemed or reconciled to God. No longer separated by sin but being re-united with Him. We now find favor with God. Without our reconciliation there is no way to be found favorable to Him.

In conclusion, let’s review some of the things that we have learned.

We see that a favorable life is one that is spent in service to God. We see that women are important and God did not make us to be any less of a person than a man. When we see

that in all facets of life, there must be one that has the responsibility in these matters or things will go smoother and subjection becomes a blessing and not a burden. Everyone having his way would be mob rule!

A woman who seeks a favorable life is one who seeks to glorify God with her body and her words as well. A woman's influence is over-whelming. She affects her husband's attitudes and her children's as well. She can be *the* determining force in holding the home together.

Is a woman important? We can see from this study that she most definitely is. I would like to close this chapter with this story.

"As the old lady kneaded the dough, a quiet but curious youngster sat watching. After having sat quietly for several minutes he asked, "Why are you doing that?" The old lady never stopped but simply raised her head and said, "The more you work the dough the smoother the bisquits."

We can glean much from this old lady. The more we work with others the more we learn about life and our own selves. The finished product is a much better self. All of the rough edges and lumps disappeared from the dough and so will our lives be. Never allow foolish pride to keep us from working with others. Jesus showed us many examples. He worked with Peter — look at his finished product!

Yield your life to the Lord and let Him help you to be the finished product that He knows you can be.

Just like dough, after it is baked, the form is set, so are we if we neglect Bible study to the point our hearts and lives become hardened. Young people can be set and shaped into whatever example we set before them. Please take heed for your life, for your sake and for those who love you.

QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER SIX

1. Define reconciled.
2. Whose tribe did the Messiah spring from?
3. What separates man and God?
4. How do we have access to Jesus' blood?
5. Define redeem.
6. What scripture shows that God had a plan from the beginning to save man?
7. What is the most important thing I have learned in this study?
8. How can I be found favorable to God?
9. Whose responsibility is it to take Jesus to the world?
10. How many people have I personally brought to Jesus in my life-time?

TEST OVER QUESTIONS IN CHAPTERS ONE – SIX

1. What is God's pattern of authority?
2. What would be the result of everyone having his own way?
3. How can an elder's wife affect his qualifications?
4. What is the definition of "homemaker"?
5. Is "subjection" an outdated term?
6. What can an unmarried lady do to show her subjection?
7. What effect will my influence as a woman have on those around me?
8. Why do so many marriages today fail?
9. What was God's plan for marriage from the beginning?
10. Does God simply want "law keepers"?
11. What does a life-time commitment mean in marriage?
12. How can a Christian wife win her non-believing husband?
13. What are some problems faced in marriage? How do we overcome them?
14. Is love for husband an automatic thing?
15. What does "keeper at home" mean?

16. Name at least three mothers who were very good examples of motherhood.
17. Is corporal punishment necessary in discipline of your children?
18. What is the "rod of correction"?
19. Should Mary be exalted today?
20. Who is Mary's mediator?
21. What is a friend?
22. Give the passage that gives us a definition of a friend in the Bible.
23. Who is our best friend?
24. We can have our own mission field at
25. is changeless.
26. Do I always have the right to exercise my freedom?
27. Who is our example of a teacher?
28. What is the most important "job" in the church?
29. Can a woman teach a man? If so, in what way?
30. What is to be foremost in our minds for us to be good teachers?
31. What is important to know about a pupil to teach him correctly?
32. Do I personally qualify as a good teacher?
33. What can a woman do in service to God? Name several.
34. Define "reconciled".
35. Whose tribe did the Messiah spring from?
36. What separates man from God?
37. How do we have access to Jesus' blood?
38. Who is responsible for taking Jesus to the world?
39. What is the most important lesson I have learned in this study?
40. How can I lead a favorable life?

Epilogue

I have written this book, not as an expert, but as one who has suffered through most of the problems in it. I sincerely hope that in some way you have been encouraged to seek a favorable life.

God has bestowed one of the most important jobs in the world on us. A wife, mother, friend, teacher, and Christian woman, a life of service and favor to all!

To help a needy soul along lifes way,
To brighten anothers day,
To give joy to a lonely child's heart,
Knowing that in doing my part,
I do it all in His name,
Not seeking credit or fame.
Just to hear a child's shout of glee,
Just from being with no one but me!